DISCIPLINE IN LITHUANIAN ARMED FORCES. Lithuanian National Defense Minister Linas Linkevicius told reporters on 20 February that members of the armed forces committed 4,296 infractions in 1994. There were 2,014 incidents of hazing by older soldiers. Ninety-six cases were taken to courts, 46 of which ended with convictions. Twenty-two soldiers died in 1994, five of which from beatings. Linkevicius said that discipline in the armed forces was improving and would be helped if the parliament passed a law on national defense and created a military police. -- Saulius Girnius, OMRI, Inc.

LITHUANIAN PRESIDENT'S STATE OF NATION SPEECH. In his hour-long annual address to the parliament on 21 February, Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas noted that Lithuania's Gross Domestic Product increased in 1994, the first time that had occurred in five years. He added that inflation was less than 5% of what it was in 1992, and said that trade with the West was greater than with the CIS, although Russia remained Lithuania's main trading partner. Brazauskas said exports must be increased to diminish the existing foreign trade deficit. Implementation of laws and resolutions was the weakest part of the government, he noted. Speaking on foreign policy strategy, he said that the primary focus will be greater integration into European political, economic, and defense systems. -- Saulius Girnius, OMRI, Inc.

LITHUANIAN PREMIER PRESS CONFERENCE. During a press conference on 23 February, Lithuanian Prime Minister Adolfas Slezevicius devoted his attention to two main issues: his trip the next day to Moscow and "deprivatization". Agreements on mutual travel, border crossings, and customs cooperation will be signed during his meeting with Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin. The talks will also deal with border delimitation, return of Lithuanian embassy buildings in Paris and Rome, long term agreements on purchasing oil and gas from Russia, and other issues. Slezevicius also noted that he was opposed to the Seimas' decision to include the Ignalina atomic power plant and Kedainiai chemical plant in the list of enterprises not to be privatized until the year 2000. Similarly, he opposes the no-confidence motion against industry and Trade Minister Kazimieras Klimasauskas that the Seimas commission for investigating economic crimes is intending to initiate for not taking a stand in the Kedainiai plant's earlier privatization. -- Saulius Girnius, OMRI, Inc.